

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/493,783

Examiner

Susanna M. Diaz

Applicant(s)

SCHLICK ET AL.

Art Unit

3623

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the Examiner's Amendment agreed to on May 26, 2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 4,6,8,10-36,40,41,43-49,52-58,60,62,64-90,94,95,97-103 and 106-111.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 28 January 2000 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

Susanna Diaz
SUSANNA M. DIAZ
PRIMARY EXAMINER
AU 3623

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with C. Eric Schulman (Reg. No. 43,350) on May 26, 2005.

The application has been amended as follows:

Cancel claims 1-3, 5, 7, 9, 59, 61, and 63.

Claim 4, line 4, insert --stored in an indexed and normalized form-- after "data"

Claim 4, line 4, delete "as least one of"

Claim 4, last line of the claim, delete "user. ", insert the following:

--user;

wherein each process further includes providing user performance support that includes providing examples to the user regarding the data being elicited upon an indication by the user that such providing of examples is desired; and

wherein each analysis process further includes process checking to screen and filter data input by the user to ensure the completeness and correctness thereof.--

Claim 6, line 1, delete "claim 5", insert --claim 4--

Claim 8, line 1, delete "claim 5", insert --claim 4--

Claim 10, line 1, delete "claim 9", insert --claim 4--

Claim 11, line 1, delete "claim 9", insert --claim 4--

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Claim 12, line 1, delete "claim 9", insert --claim 4--

Claim 13, line 1, delete "claim 9", insert --claim 4--

Claim 16, line 1, delete "claim 9", insert --claim 4--

Claim 58, line 4, insert --stored in an indexed and normalized form and-- after
"knowledge base"

Claim 58, line 28, delete "processes", insert --modules--

Claim 58, last line of the claim, delete "user,.", insert the following:

--user;

wherein each module further includes providing user performance support that
includes providing examples to the user regarding the data being elicited upon an
indication by the user that such providing of examples is desired; and

wherein each module further includes module checking to screen and filter data
input by the user to ensure the completeness and correctness thereof. --

Claim 60, line 1, delete "claim 59", insert --claim 58--

Claim 62, line 1, delete "claim 59", insert --claim 58--

Claim 64, line 1, delete "claim 63", insert --claim 58--

Claim 64, line 2, delete "process", insert --module--

Claim 65, line 1, delete "claim 63", insert --claim 58--

Claim 65, line 2, delete "process", insert --module--

Claim 66, line 1, delete "claim 63", insert --claim 58--

Claim 66, line 2, delete "process", insert --module--

Claim 67, line 1, delete "claim 63", insert --claim 58--

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Claim 67, line 2, delete "process", insert --module--

Claim 70, line 1, delete "claim 63", insert --claim 58--

Claim 70, line 2, delete "analysis process", insert --module--

Claim 70, line 2, delete "process checking", insert --module checking--

Claim 71, line 2, delete "analysis process", insert --module--

Claim 74, line 2, delete "process", insert --module--

Claim 82, line 2, delete "side effect analysis process", insert --side effect analysis
module--

Claim 82, line 2, delete "potential problem analysis process", insert --potential
problem analysis module--

Claim 83, line 2, delete "side effect analysis process", insert --side effect analysis
module--

Claim 83, line 2, delete "potential opportunity analysis process", insert --potential
opportunity analysis module--

Claim 84, line 2, delete "process", insert --module--

Claim 84, line 3, delete "process", insert --module--

Claim 84, line 3, delete "processes", insert --modules--

Claim 85, line 2, delete "the process data", insert --the module data--

Claim 85, line 2, delete "situation appraisal process", insert --situation appraisal
module--

Claim 86, line 2, delete "the process data", insert --the module data--

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Claim 86, line 2, delete "problem analysis process", insert --problem analysis module--

Claim 87, line 2, delete "the process data", insert --the module data--

Claim 87, line 2, delete "decision analysis process", insert --decision analysis module--

Claim 88, line 2, delete "the process data", insert --the module data--

Claim 88, line 3, delete "process", insert --module--

Claim 89, line 3, delete "processes", insert --modules--

Claim 89, line 3, delete "process", insert --module--

Claim 90, line 4, delete "process", insert --module--

Claim 94, line 2, delete "process", insert --module--

Claim 97, line 3, delete "processes", insert --modules--

Claim 106, line 2, delete "analysis process", insert --module--

Reasons for Allowance

2. Claims 4, 6, 8, 10-36, 40, 41, 43-49, 52-58, 60, 62, 64-90, 94, 95, 97-103, and 106-111 are allowed.

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

This closest prior art of record is Decision Focus® Software, as disclosed in the following references submitted by Applicant:

"Decision Focus® Software User's Guide (Version 1.0)," copyright 1995;

"Decision Focus® Software Network Version 1.0 User's Guide," copyright 1995;
Print-outs of On-Screen Worksheets from Decision Focus® Software; and
Screenshots (Figs. 1-24) from Decision Focus® Software (Version 1.0)
in view of Lee ("Justifying Database Normalization: A Cost/Benefit Model").

Decision Focus® Software discloses the various processes/modules recited in claims 4 and 58 (i.e., the situation appraisal process/module, the problem analysis process/module, the decision analysis process/module, the potential side effect process/module, and the action tracker process/module). Decision Focus® Software does not expressly teach that the recited data is stored in an indexed and normalized form; however, Lee discusses the benefits of using normalized databases, thereby providing motivation for implementing the Decision Focus® Software utilizing a normalized database. Neither Decision Focus® Software nor Lee expressly discloses (a) user performance support that includes providing examples to the user regarding the data being elicited upon an indication by the user that such providing of examples is desired or (b) process/module checking to screen and filter data input by the user to ensure the completeness and correctness thereof. While limitations (a) and (b) are separately old and well-known in the art, the **combination** of these limitations (i.e., (a) and (b)) with the various recited processes/modules wherein the data is stored in an indexed and normalized form is not taught or suggested by the prior art. This combination of limitations is recited in independent claims 4 and 58; therefore, claims 4,

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6, 8, 10-36, 40, 41, 43-49, 52-58, 60, 62, 64-90, 94, 95, 97-103, and 106-111 are deemed to be allowable over the prior art of record.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Ouimet et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,308,162) -- Discloses a method for controlled optimization of enterprise planning models.

Lobley et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,151,565) -- Discloses a decision support system.

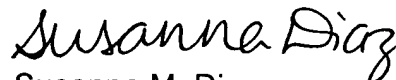
Toda (JP 08083182 A) -- Discloses a decision support system.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Susanna M. Diaz whose telephone number is (571) 272-6733. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 10 am - 6 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Susanna M. Diaz
Primary Examiner
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May 27, 2005